



Food and Agriculture  
Organization of the  
United Nations

# WOULD YOU JUDGE A BOOK BY ITS COVER?

BOOK COVER DESIGNS ON PULSES  
AND LEGUMES FROM THE  
FAO LIBRARY COLLECTIONS

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FAO. 2017. **Would you judge a book by its cover?**  
**Book cover designs on pulses and legumes from**  
**the FAO Library collections.** Rome.

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Texts: Sarah Dister and Véronique Montes Baffier

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## Acknowledgements

This book collects all the texts from the library exhibition *Would you judge a book by its cover?* which took place during 2016 in Rome at the FAO David Lubin Memorial Library.

The preparation of the book as well as the exhibition was possible with the support and input of many individuals from the library, archives and publication teams. Special thanks to: **Michelle Bergerre** and **Sara Carnevale** who found the beautiful covers in the library collections and helped us throughout the process; **Milena Cazzato** for her valuable insight on bibliographic citation; **Fabio Ciccarello** who assisted us with the FAO logo research; **Alison Small** and **Julian Plummer** for editing our texts; **Monica Umena** who was able to translate our ideas and texts into a wonderful design for both the exhibition and the book; and **Pedro Javaloyes** for providing the guidance that helped us to achieve both goals.





# Introduction

The 68<sup>th</sup> UN General Assembly declared **2016 the International Year of Pulses (IYP)**. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) was nominated to facilitate its implementation by hosting various events throughout the year, highlighting the nutritional value and health benefits of pulses, their contribution to food security, biodiversity and climate change mitigation.

*“These super foods have been nourishing people since historical records began and a long time before”* declared the Director-General *Jose Graziano da Silva*.<sup>1</sup>

Within this context, the FAO library has contributed to the IYP with an exhibition and a book showing an historical perspective with publications on pulses and legumes from the International Institute of Agriculture’s collection, FAO first editions and its current and worldwide monographic collections.

The aim of raising awareness on pulses through an artistic perspective was the key element behind the library’s exhibition held in Rome in the fall of 2016. This book compiles all the texts and illustrations exhibited, showing some of the most beautiful book covers on these leguminous crops from the 1910s to the present day, illustrating how design has changed over the decades to reflect the content, attract audiences and celebrate art.

We are all familiar with the saying: “Don’t judge a book by its cover” but can we in fact do so? We invite you to explore this selection of books on pulses and legumes from the FAO Library collections and consider enjoying them for their covers!

<sup>1</sup> FAO. 2016. *Pulses: nutritious seeds for a sustainable future*. Rome, FAO.





# 1910s

## ART NOUVEAU



# Pea

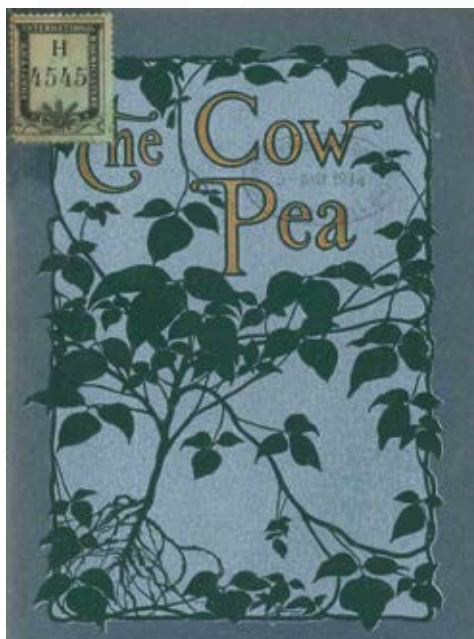
The beginning of the twentieth century is characterized by a new art style suitably called Art Nouveau. A highly decorative style using curvilinear patterns often based on plant and floral motifs and stylized female silhouettes. The movement comes to an end with the First World War and the Russian Revolution, historical moments that call for a more sober style.



# 1914

## The cow pea

Author: Supervising Committee of the  
Experimental Farms of the North Carolina  
State Horticultural Society  
Publisher: New York (USA), German Kali Works



Acquired in 1914, and republished by German Kali Works, this booklet forms one of a series of charming pamphlets about pulses and other produce.

An early user's manual, this volume is illustrated in the Art Nouveau style of the period (mid-1890s to the First World War), focused on elevating to a high level the decorative arts in a sophisticated manner. Its influence within book cover design is complex, ranging from geometrical patterns to floral motifs with curves rooted in British and Japanese art, as we can appreciate in this delicately designed cover.

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# 1914

## Plant food: its nature, composition and most profitable use

Author: Supervising Committee of the  
Experimental Farms of the North Carolina State  
Horticultural Society

Publisher: New York (USA), German Kali Works



Part of the German Kali Works' reprinted series of 18 volumes from the North Carolina State Horticultural Society (the United States of America), *Plant Food*, which was "prepared to aid practical farmers", refers to the "nature, composition and most profitable use of fertilizers" that were originally provided "upon request" to farmers.

Following the Art Nouveau movement of decorative art characterized by floral and curvilinear geometrical patterns – see roots – the beautiful cover depicts Ceres, the Roman goddess of agriculture, crops, fertile land and grain, fertilizing the land with potassium, phosphorus and nitrogen.

.....



# 1911

## Le fave

Author: Gorni, O.

Publisher: Casale Monferreto (Italy),  
F.lli Ottavi



This booklet, part of a series of similar pamphlets published in 1911, formed part of a distinguished historical collection of the Ottavi family in Italy (passionate promoters of innovative agronomic knowledge for public use) of works on agriculture dating back to 1850.

*Le Fave* explains every aspect of beans and their cultivation, describing the different kinds, their cultivation, including how the land should be farmed, the use of fertilizer, the seeds and their harvesting and how to guard against pest infection.

The elegant illustration in gold and sepia by Arturo Stagliano is typical of the series of books that form part of "I libri del campagnolo" (books for rural producers). It depicts the heroism of the working class using the social realism style. Stagliano, an Italian artist (1870-1936), was initially influenced by Leonardo Bistolfi, an important exponent of Italian symbolism, but moved to a more classical style in the second part of his artistic activity in line with the social movements of the decade. Some decorative art nouveau details can be found within the text.



# 1911

## Il fagiolino

Author: Cozzolino, M.

Publisher: Naples (Italy), G. M. Priore



Charming in its simplicity, this 1911 extract from the periodical *La Rivista Agraria*, describes bean production in the Naples region of Italy.

The author tells us that the string bean (*Phaesolus vulgaris* L.) is a direct descendent of its Indian counterpart and that Pomponius believed that the string bean was introduced to Rome from Phaseli, a maritime city on the island of Egeus and from which the Italian and Latin retain its original name.

After 1900, the cover designs of periodicals gradually became simpler. This unillustrated cover reflects the simplicity as well as the format of the journals of the period. Nerveless, we can find some art nouveau motives within the text.






# 1920s-30s

## ART DECO





The rich Art Nouveau movement is replaced in the 1920s by Art Deco, a more streamlined, rectilinear style, often characterized by rich colours and bold geometric shapes. Being scientific publications, they are more measured in design.



# Fleurs, fruits, légumes

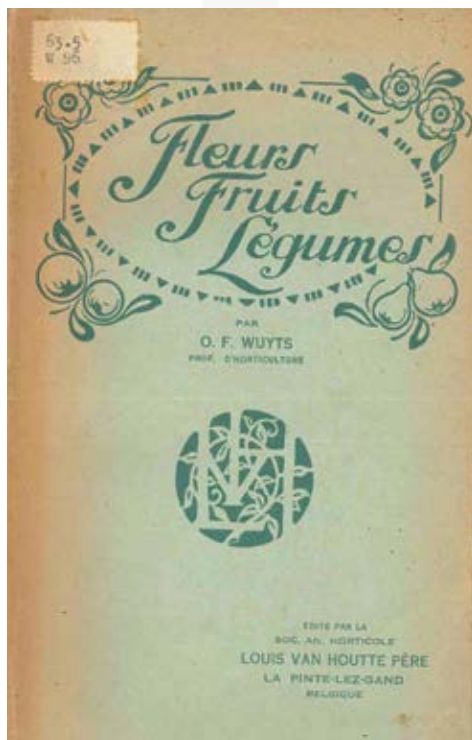
Year: [s.d.]

Author: Wuyts, O. F.

Publishers: Ghent (Belgium),

Société Anonyme Horticole.

Louis van Houtte père



This detailed publication is one of a number of agricultural publications from Belgium of the period. It refers in particular to the virtues of city-gardens and urban gardening, not least for their health benefits, encouraging people to get more fresh air.

The cover illustrates a perfect example of the Art Deco style of the 1920s, using the beautiful logo of Louis van Houtte, a Belgian horticulturist and founder of the Belgian Royal Horticultural Society, by which this book was published.

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# Haricot: culture rationnelle

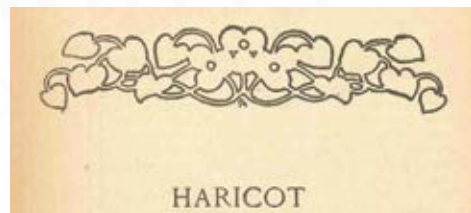
Year: [s.d.]

Author: Librairie Larousse

Publisher: Paris (France), Librairie Larousse

This book refers to the year 1917 in which it indicates the difficulties that existed in producing food, in particular following a poor corn harvest, which in turn affected the production of meat, milk and related products. For this reason, the author expresses his hope that this is the moment for the humble bean to take its rightful place on the daily menu.

With an illustration on the front cover and Art Deco details framing the chapter titles, it is noteworthy that the back cover shows the first known logo of the great Larousse dictionary, dating back to 1876.





# 1921

## Il pisello

Author: Viani, P.

Publisher: Catania (Italy), F. Battiato



This technical manual provides an exhaustive description, not only of the origins of peas but also where and how to cultivate them depending on the zone and type. The publishing house, Francesco Battiato, specialized in publications about farming and rural industries in the period from 1900 to 1930.

The fine cover illustration stands out for its beauty and craftsmanship. The realistic botanical drawing reflects the scientifically technical approach taken by this publication.

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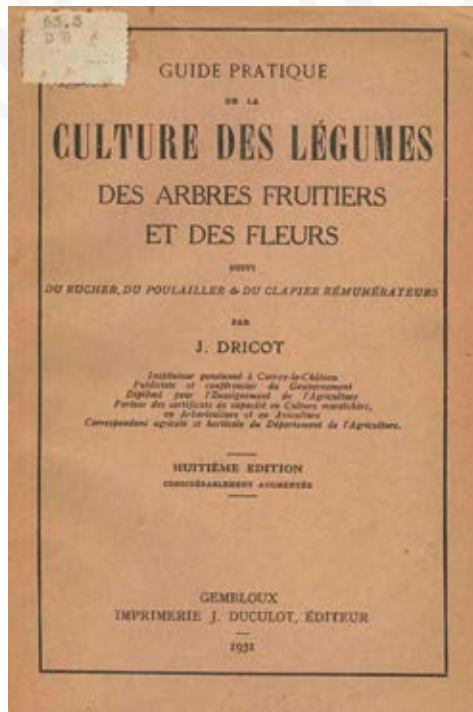


# 1931

## Guide pratique de la culture des légumes des arbres fruitiers et des fleurs

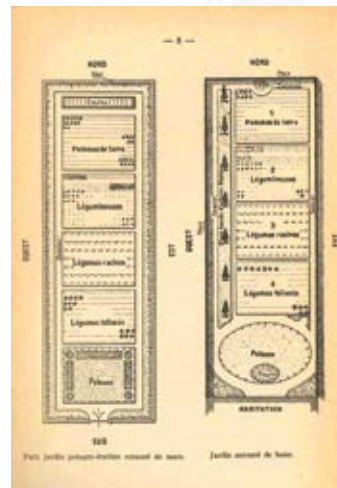
Author: Dricot, J.

Publisher: Gembloux (Belgium), J. Duculot



Published in 1931, this highly practical manual was already in its eighth edition when included in the International Institute of Agriculture (IIA) collection. As can be seen from the title, it covers a broad spectrum of plant and small-stock production with an emphasis on growing legumes. The publisher was a master printer who moved to Gembloux, Belgium, which afforded him the opportunity provided by being near local agronomy universities to publish specialized monographs.

The cover is a typical representation of academic design of scientific books of the period, with an emphasis on the documented curriculum of the author. Note the illustrations of cropping patterns using geometric ornamentation.





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# 1940s-50s

## INTERNATIONAL TYPOGRAPHIC STYLE

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In the 1950s, we see functional cover designs that are entirely centred on the bibliographic information. Titles, authors and publishers are displayed with bold fonts and framed by monochromatic design and square lines. It is a neutral approach that emphasizes rational planning. The Scandinavian colour scheme, which is heavily influenced by nature and includes shades of brown, cream, grey and green, becomes one of the major colour trends of the period.



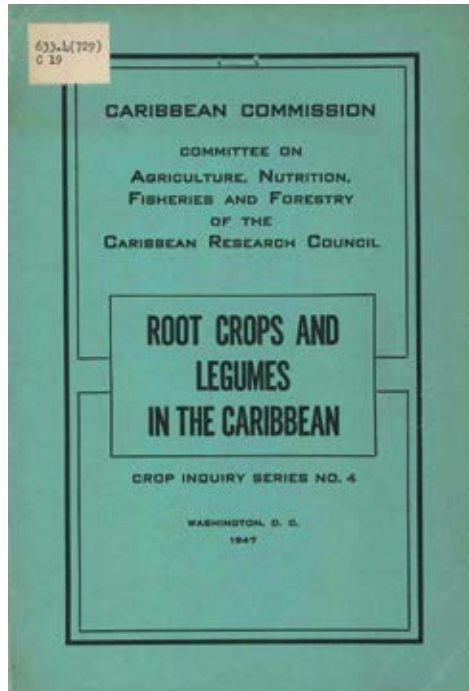
# 1947

## Root crops and legumes in the Caribbean

Author: Caribbean Commission

Publisher: Washington, DC (USA),

Caribbean Commission



Published in 1947 by the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, Fisheries and Forestry of the Caribbean Research Council, the book serves to highlight the particular position of Caribbean islands and their tendency at the time to rely on export crops rather than food crops. The book is fascinating both for its political insights as well as the presentation of practical information on root crops and legumes in the different island States of the Caribbean.

The cover highlights, with bold fonts, monochromatic design and structured square spaces, the technical aspect of this Crop Inquiry Series publication. This classical layout with an overall sense of controlled space underlines the functionality of a design that reflects the practicality of the content.

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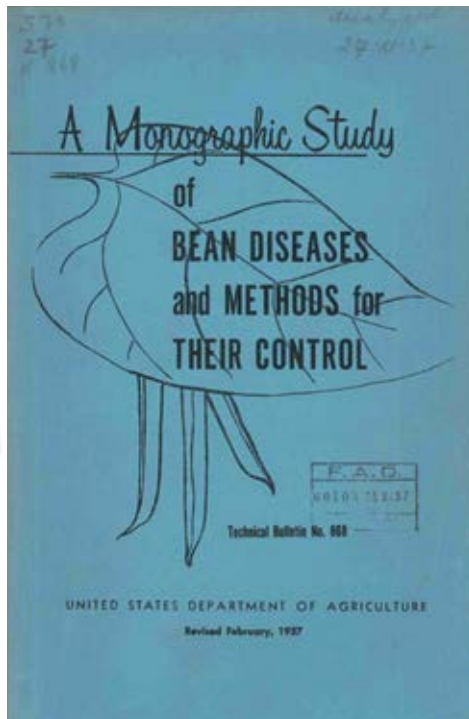
1957

## A monographic study of bean diseases and methods for their control

Authors: Zaumeyer, W.J., Thomas, H.R.

Publisher: Washington, DC (USA), United States

Department of Agriculture



This technical bulletin of the US Department of Agriculture assembles as much of the pertinent information as possible on bean diseases that was not generally well known or had appeared only in obscure journals and in languages other than English.

Although a technical publication, the cover has a soft drawing design of a bean with the leaf embracing the title. The subtle elegance of the drawing grid and functional restraint allows the picture to have a dominant space without unbalancing the page. It is a clear example of 1950s functional design in book covers.

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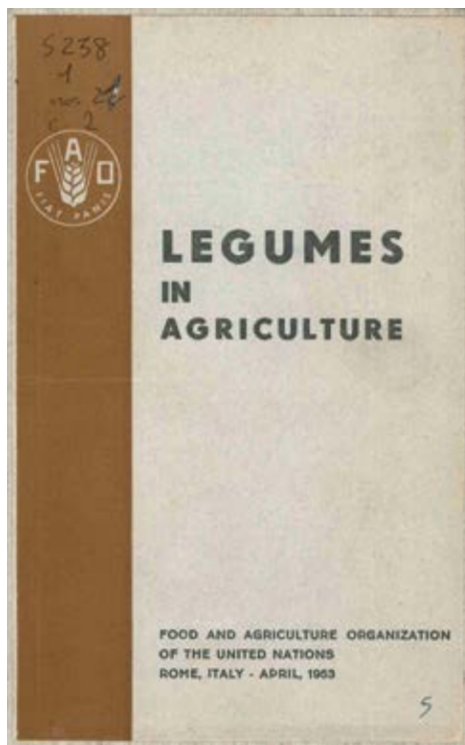
# 1953

## Legumes in agriculture

Authors: Whyte, R.O.,  
Nilsson-Leissner, G. & Trumble, H.C.  
Publisher: Rome (Italy),  
Food and Agriculture Organization  
of the United Nations

This FAO publication is one of the earliest works on legumes published by the Organization. It is a review of the state of scientific and practical knowledge and experience in producing legumes, and provides an insight into the problems that were engaging agronomists and researchers worldwide during the 1950s.

The cover reflects the simplicity of the first FAO designs with a monochrome-like palette and bold titles, following the 1950s design style with relatively little use of graphics with an emphasis on functionality. On the cover, we find the first official version of the FAO logo.







This first version of the logo is based on a design that was created for the second session of the FAO Conference, held in Copenhagen (Denmark), 2–13 September 1946: a small black and silver button with the FAO logo.



The logo of the International Institute of Agriculture (IIA) is a symbol of three stylized ears of wheat. It appears throughout the monographs and reports published by the IIA until it ceased operations in 1945.





# 1960s

## TIME OF CONTRASTS



The influence of early 20th-century art movements like Suprematism and Constructivism forged a new relationship between art, text, image and reader to channel the power of modernity. This is also a time of change and contrasts with high-tech designs in contrast with the popular hippie culture. Some designers use a colour scheme inspired by nature while others are influenced by the contrasting colours of Art Nouveau.



# 1964

## Les graines de légumineuses dans l'alimentation humaine

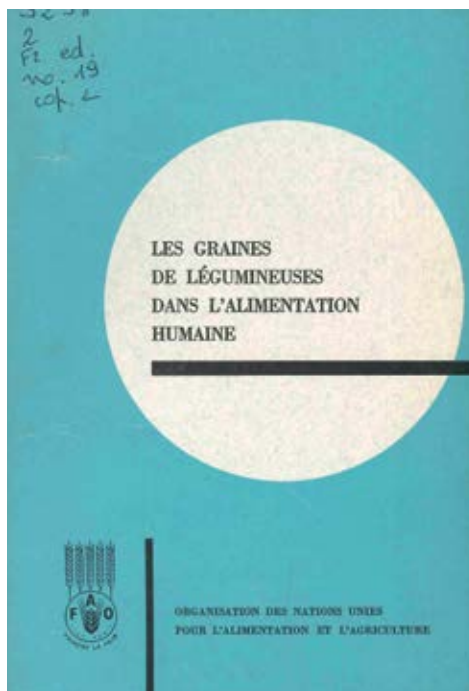
Author: Aykroyd, W.R., Doughty, J.

Publisher: Rome (Italy), Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

This publication is the fourth report on food that formed part of the FAO Nutritional Series, which included rice, maize and milk. The book summarizes the knowledge at that time about the production, consumption and nutritive value of legumes and their contribution to human diets.

The beautiful geometrical design of this cover reminds us of the Russian Suprematist style of Kazimir Malevich.

The FAO logo merits a mention in its own right. At the end of the 1950s, some aspects of the first official version of the FAO logo are changed: the square O in FAO becomes round and the ear of wheat is redesigned. The adapted logo is used for the first time in the FAO logo developed for the Freedom-From-Hunger-Campaign (launched in 1959). In this particular case the space outside the logo has also been used to create a specific campaign-related logo.





# 1969

## Cultivo de las menestras en el Perú

Authors: Bocanegra, S., Echandi, E.

Publisher: Lima (Peru), Ministerio de Agricultura,

Misión Agrícola de la Universidad de Carolina del Norte



This book is written for local farmers and agronomists, providing them with the results of technical projects supervised by Peru's Agriculture Department and aimed at speeding-up and strengthening pulse production, given that pulses form the core of the Peruvian diet.

This ethnic-look cover is typical of the hippie period of the 1960s. The hand-written typeface underscores its social message and its availability at a cost within reach of a modest budget. The curvilinear drawing takes us back to the Art Nouveau style.

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## FAO logo history

FAO's first Director-General, Sir John Boyd Orr, addresses the need for "an official FAO seal, to use on documents, printed on FAO publications etc."<sup>2</sup> in 1946, one year after the foundation of the Organization. He suggests adopting the design created for the second session of the FAO Conference, held in Copenhagen (Denmark), 2-13 September 1946<sup>3</sup>: a small black and silver button with an FAO logo<sup>4</sup>.



This button was designed by Harald Nielsen, a silversmith who worked for Georg Jensen Silversmiths in Denmark. Nielsen's design was inspired by the Art Nouveau movement and characterized by strong clear lines. Central to the logo is an ear of wheat<sup>5</sup>: a continuation of the three ears of wheat that formed the logo of FAO's predecessor, the International Institute of Agriculture.



The Latin motto *Ut educas panem de terra* ("That he may bring forth food out of the earth" which refers to all the interests of FAO, from nutrition to agriculture to forestry to fisheries) was the favorite motto to accompany the logo, but it was rejected eventually, because it was too long.<sup>6</sup>

At that point Sir John Boyd Orr proposes the Latin motto *Fiat panis*, meaning "Let there be bread" or more freely translated "Let there be food" which becomes the official FAO motto still in use today. "The motto signifies the primary purpose of FAO that of raising the levels of food production and of nutrition the world over"<sup>7</sup>.

Mid-1947, a first official version of the FAO logo begins appearing in an irregular way on some FAO documents. It is the same logo we find on the cover of the FAO publication *Legumes in Agriculture* from 1953.

<sup>2</sup> FAO Archives. RG8LEG - LE21/4. Vol. I: Adm seal 3.3A2. <sup>3</sup> FAO Archives. RG8LEG - LE21/4. Vol. I: 27 January 1960. <sup>4</sup> FAO Archives RG031.0 Series L4: Designs of the FAO Seal 0-109: This folder contains a copy of the Danish design, a note underneath says: "Orig button is 18 mm in diameter". <sup>5</sup> "The world's greatest bread grain", from the brief statement prepared by the Information Service for Sir John Boyd Orr to inform the Executive Committee on the FAO seal (FAO Archives. RG8LEG - LE21/4. Vol. I: Adm seal 3.1A5). <sup>6</sup> FAO Archives. RG031.0 Series L4: Designs of the FAO Seal 0-109; FAO Archives. RG8LEG - LE21/4. Vol. I: Adm seal 3.1A5. <sup>7</sup> FAO Archives. RG8LEG - LE21/4. Vol. I: Adm seal 3.3A2.





At the end of the 1950s, a discussion takes place on changing some aspects of the logo. Mr. Engeler, chief Printing and Offset section, takes up the task of “reshaping the emblem to greater effect”. He describes his view on the purpose of a logo as follows: “An emblem has to announce an idea and epitomize a pledge. Symbolic representation is the most important means of concentrated expression. It must be a characteristic combination of the elements of the design in abstract form, and it must have an aesthetic as well as a graphic effect. The design must be a creation of our times capable of being understood in times to come.”

We do not have a drawing of Mr Engeler’s proposal, but according to his own words, he changed, among others, the circle into a triangle, since “this is an ancient symbol expressing organization”<sup>8</sup>. Engeler’s proposal is rejected, but the discussion continues. Among others, Mr. Cyprien, chief Visual Media, proposes to get rid of “the unattractive square O” and Mr. Cassola, chief Graphics, proposes to eliminate the peculiar “sawn-off” appearance of the base of the wheat ear”<sup>9</sup>. Both proposals are accepted and the changes are used for

the first time in the FAO logo developed for the Freedom-From-Hunger-Campaign (launched in 1959). In this particular case the space outside the logo has also been used to create a specific campaign-related logo.



Still in 1959, Mr. Engeler comes with another proposal which this time around is accepted: the tips and the stem of the wheat ear are extended to divide the circle of the logo in three (triangle?) sections<sup>10</sup>.



Mr. ENGELER

It is this FAO logo which is approved by Director-General B.R. Sen and is registered on 1 July 1964 with the United International Bureaux for the Protection of Intellectual Property, and it is this logo we still use today<sup>11</sup>.

<sup>8</sup> FAO Archives. RG8LEG - LE21/4. Vol. I: Office memorandum, 26 June 1958, p. 2. <sup>9</sup> FAO Archives. RG8LEG - LE21/4. Vol. I: Office memorandum 1 December 1958. <sup>10</sup> The only archival prove we have of Mr. Engeler’s new proposal is a loose long card in the “Use of FAO emblem and flag (1946-1974)” archival folder containing the various proposals for the FAO logo between 1958 and 1959. The logo on this card which is assigned to Mr. Engeler is the one that is approved of by Director-General B.R. Sen. <sup>11</sup> Philips, R.W. 1981. FAO: Its origins, formation and evolution 1945-1981. Rome, FAO, p. 186. “The first published reference to its approval and use appears to have been in Administrative Circular 77/31, dated 30 March 1977, which was directed toward achieving complete uniformity in the design used. [...]



**1970s**  
**LESS IS MORE**



The 1970s are about typography and colour. Minimalism takes over. Colour printing advances and makes symbols and fonts pop out better against an “autumn” colour palette: brown, dark orange, harvest gold and avocado green. Experimentation is going on in the world of typography: letters are condensed or expanded, contain thick and thin parts or made balloony.



# 1971

## As leguminosas na agricultura tropical

Author: Döbereiner, J.[ed.]

Publisher: Sao Paulo (Brazil),

Instituto de Pesquisa Agropecuária do Centro Su



The book contains the proceedings of the fifth Latin American Meeting on Rhizobium and the Workshop on Methodology and Research Planning on Tropical Pulses.

This minimalist green book cover where Brazil is underlined with a rooted plant as a cross image at its centre, is like a heart giving life. The cover's powerful meaning is due to the simplicity of its design. This typical 1970s layout with hand-written typeface is extremely effective in capturing the eye of the reader.

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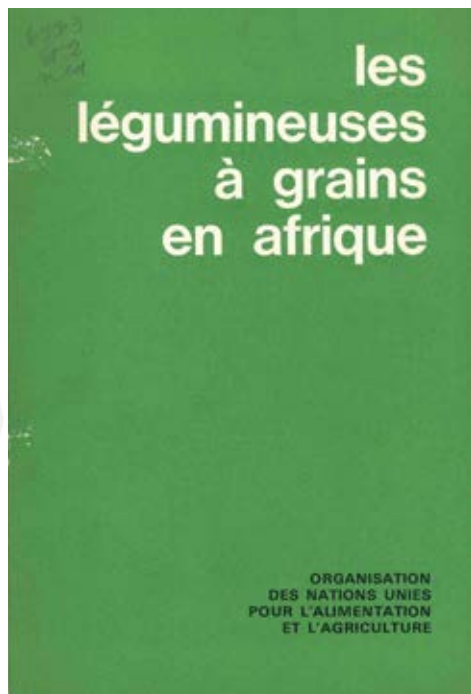
# 1970

## Les légumineuses à grains en Afrique

Author: Stanton, W.R. [et al.]

Publisher: Rome (Italy), Food and Agriculture

Organization of the United Nations



This FAO publication relates to the Whyte (1953) and Aykryod and Doughty (1964) publications, also shown in this book.

It addresses the importance of legumes in human nutrition and their biological characteristics. The different types of legumes grown in Africa are examined, with specific interest in their production.

The minimalist green cover with only the bold white title in lower case letters and the publisher's name in the bottom right hand corner really catches the eye. The FAO logo was even located on the back cover to allow the front cover to grab the reader's attention. The composition is entirely focused on the composition of the typeface and background colour.

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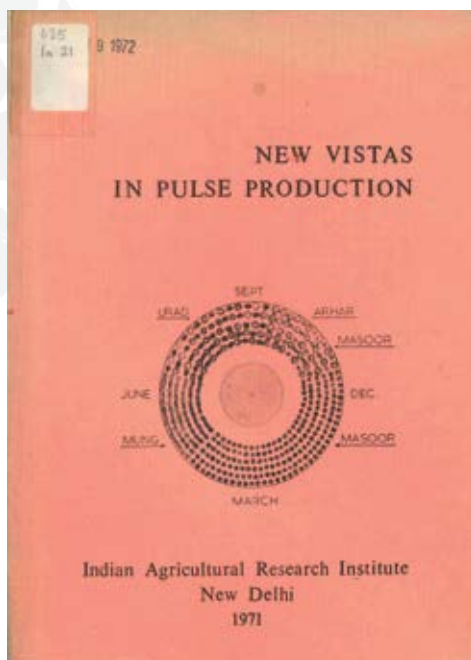
# 1971

## New vistas in pulse production

Author: Indian Agricultural Research Institute

Publisher: New Dehli (India),

Indian Agricultural Research Institute



This publication promotes the exchange and cross-fertilization of ideas and information on issues in pulse production that were of immediate relevance at the time.

The minimalist design follows that of the 1970s layouts in book covers, especially with the use of the background colour. The figure depicting, in Hindi, a multiple cropping system in which four short-duration pulse crops are grown: mung, urad, ahrar and masoor, pops out against the pink palette of the cover.

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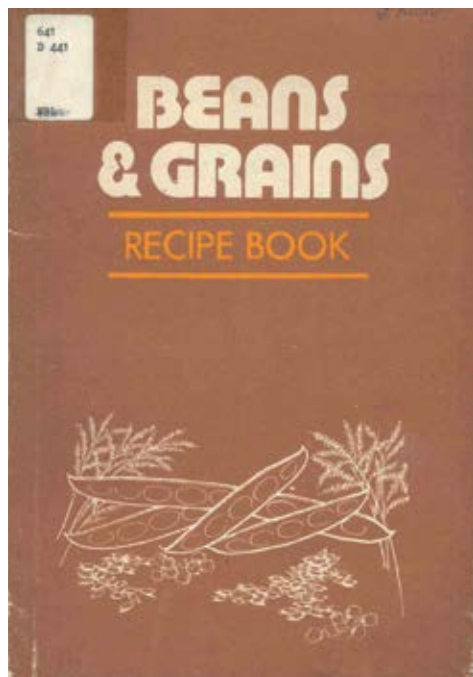


# 1976

## Beans & grains: recipe book

Author: Department of Agriculture,  
Farm Women's Agricultural Extension

Publisher: Peradeniya (Sri Lanka),  
Department of Agriculture



With FAO support, a group of women farmers and agricultural extensionists developed and tasted all the recipes included in this book, with a view to ensuring the availability of local ingredients, promoting attractive and inexpensive dishes and preserving local traditions. It represents an important step forward in the greater use of subsidiary foods to improve family nutrition.

The cover emphasizes the typeface of the title with the typical 1970s balloon typography, rather than the illustration or photograph, which would have been more expensive to reproduce. It was not intended for a large readership but rather to meet the specific needs of extensionists in Sri Lanka.

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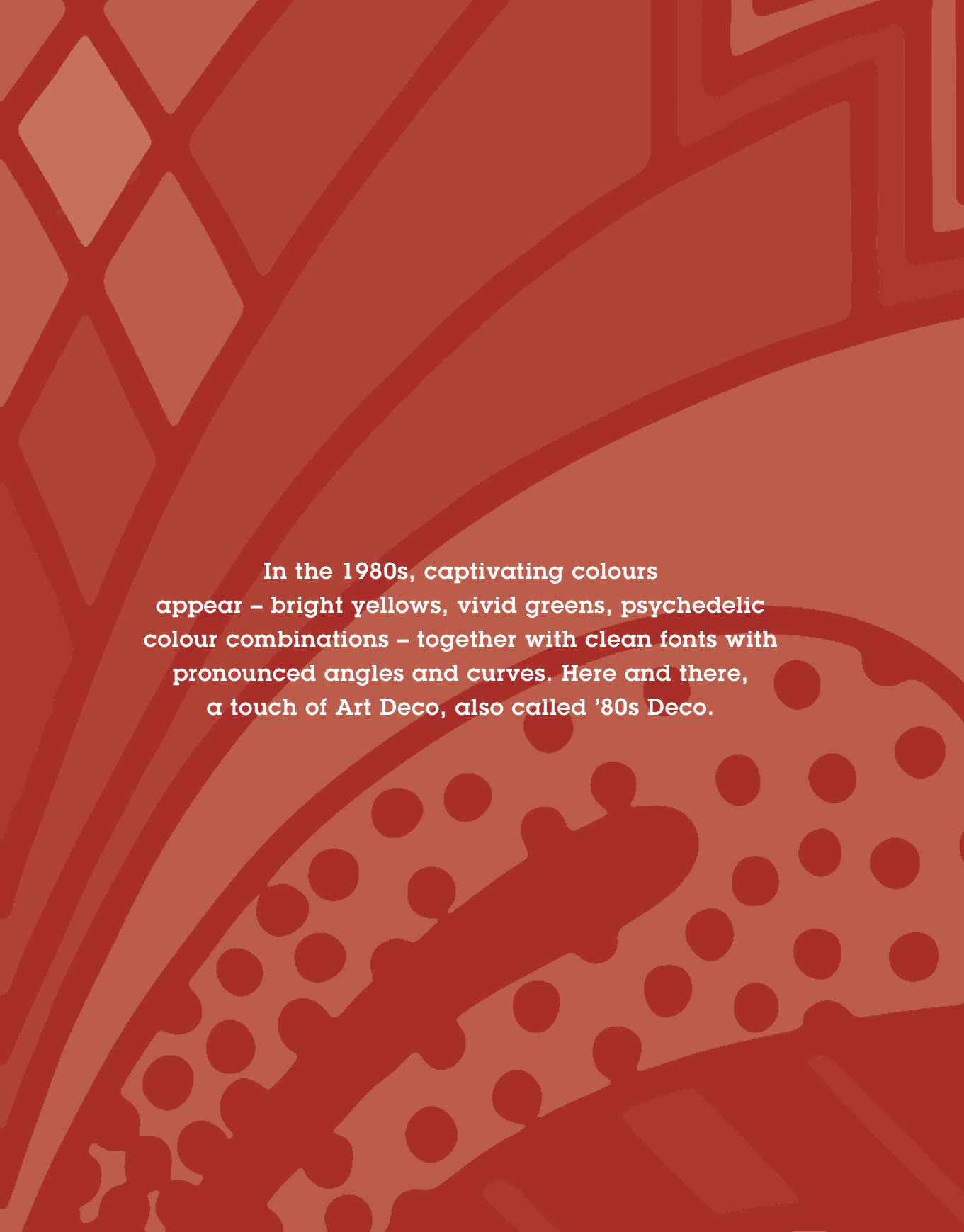


The background is a solid dark red color. It features several abstract geometric patterns. In the top right corner, there is a grid of diamond shapes. A large, curved, light red shape sweeps across the middle of the image. In the bottom left, there is a pattern of small, dark red circles. A stylized, dark red object, resembling a pen or a brush, is positioned diagonally across the lower half of the image.

# 1980s

## '80S DECO



The background is a solid reddish-orange color with various abstract patterns. In the top left, there is a grid of diamond shapes. A large, thick, curved line sweeps across the middle. In the bottom right, there are several overlapping circles and a jagged, organic shape. The text is centered in the middle of the page.

In the 1980s, captivating colours  
appear – bright yellows, vivid greens, psychedelic  
colour combinations – together with clean fonts with  
pronounced angles and curves. Here and there,  
a touch of Art Deco, also called '80s Deco.



# 1989

## Les légumineuses vivrières

Author: Borget, M.

Publisher: Paris (France),

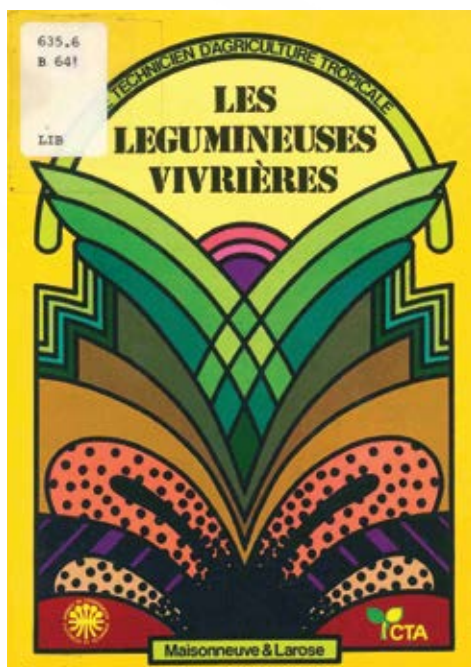
Maisonneuve et Larose

Despite its small size, this book covers diverse aspects of ten species of tropical African pulses, from their botanical study to their cultural importance and their nutritional value.

This book stands tall for its small size and strikingly colourful cover that resembles a stained-glass window. It is inspired by Art Deco geometrical style with a first-read image of a plant under and above the ground and a second depiction of “life” as represented by the rising sun.

The cover is a clear example of the neon noir 1980s graphic design: a combination of dark background overlaid with bright colours providing a distinctive visual design using a high-contrast look that grabs our attention. The imagery is also typical of the era, with a sunset and palm trees.

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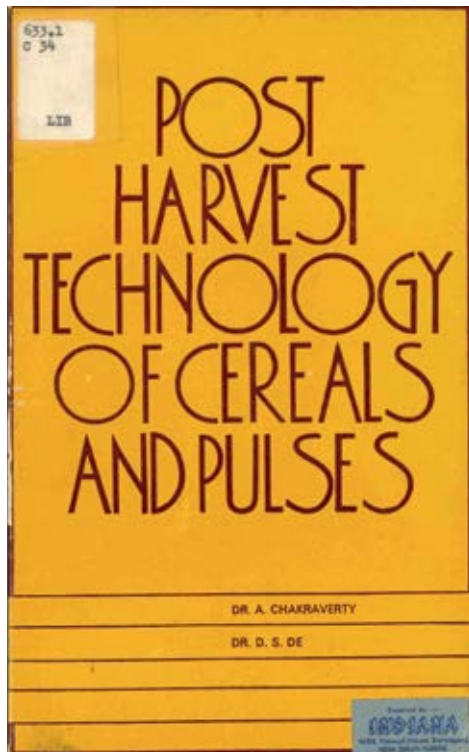
# 1981

## Post harvest technology of cereals and pulses

Author: Chakraverty, A.

Publisher: New Delhi (India),

Oxford and IBH Pub.



A comprehensive reference book on principles, processes, drying, parboiling and milling of common cereals and pulses.

The book is intended for students of agricultural engineering as well as research workers and other professionals.

The cover is a clear example of the renaissance of the Art Deco style in the 1980s.

The clean lines and sans serif font with the peach and black palette is a graphic design from the 1980s inspired by the Art Deco movement.

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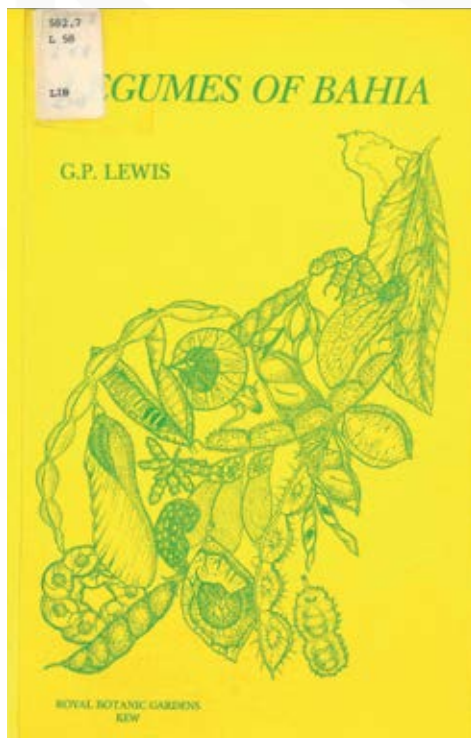


# 1987

## Legumes of Bahia

Author: Lewis, G.P.

Publisher: Kew (United Kingdom),  
Royal Botanic Gardens



The present publication aims to aid conservation measures of legumes in the Brazilian state of Bahia, elaborately depicting their richness and importance.

This book is illustrated by Sue Wilkinson, born in Sierra Leone, West Africa. She is a contemporary botanical artist with a scientific illustration degree and nine years of experience in working as an illustrator for the Royal Botanic Gardens Kew, London.

The bright colour palette of the cover follows the psychedelic aesthetic of the 1980s.

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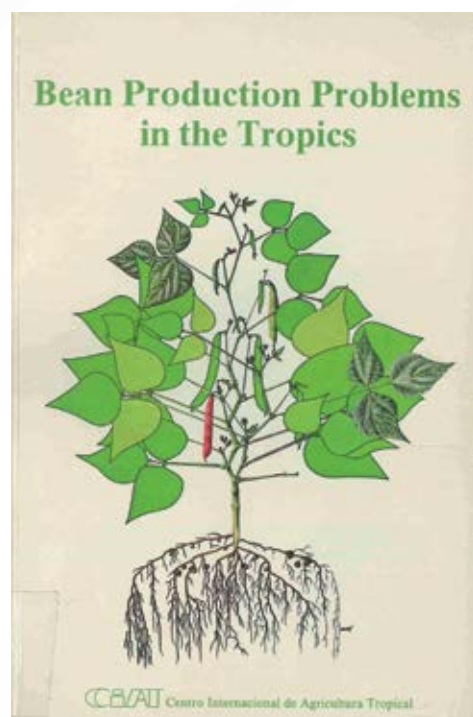
# 1989

## Bean production problems in the tropics

Author: Schwartz, H.F.

Publisher: Cali (Colombia),

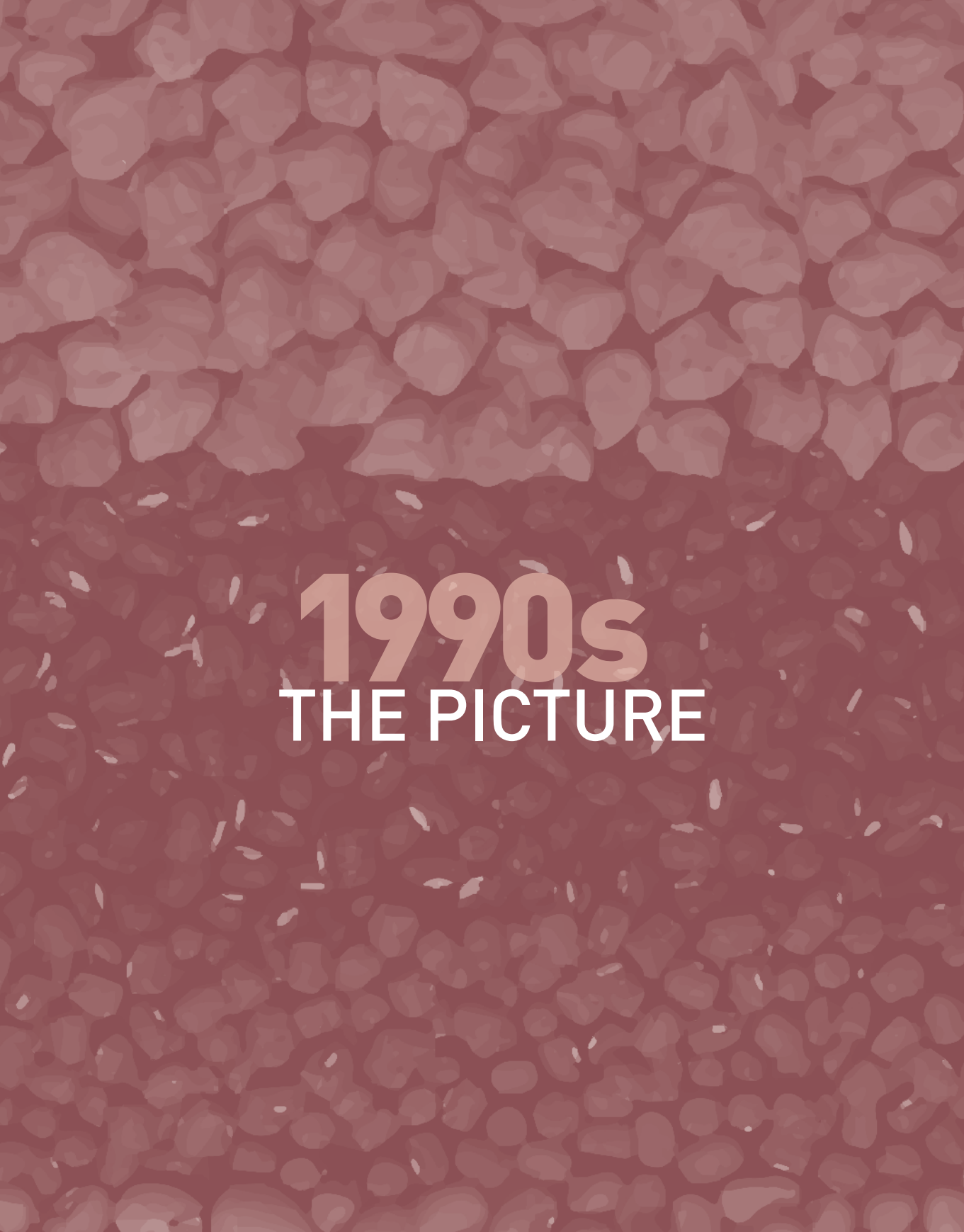
Centro Internacional de Agricultura Tropical



This second edition of the completely revised text of "Bean production problems: disease, insect, soil and climatic constraints" (1980) covers the most important production constraints of beans in Latin America and Africa, with inputs provided by new contributors.

The computer-drawing cover by Julio Martínez, an artist at CIAT's Graphic Arts unit, based on a picture of the *Phaseolus vulgaris* bean plant, is a first attempt at using Photoshop in graphic design, an idea that will be repeated throughout the 1990s and beyond. The drawing itself follows the 1980s style with a strong focal point, contrasting colours, and use of perspective.





# 1990s

## THE PICTURE



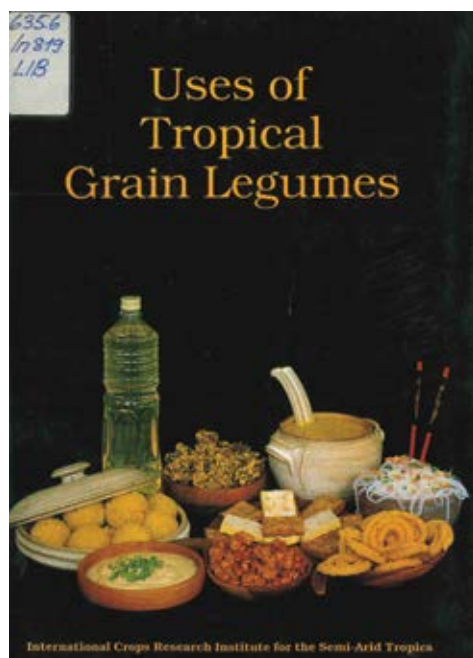
The 1990s are hard to pin down in terms of specific fonts, colours or designs, although there is a recurrent element: the picture. This may in part be due to the birth of Photoshop in the 1990s.



# 1991

## Uses of tropical grain legumes

Author: Jambunathan, R. (ed.),  
International Crops Research Institute  
for the Semi-Arid Tropics  
Publisher: Patancheru (India), ICRISAT



Proceedings of the meeting held by leading scientists from 21 countries working on legume quality and utilization. This meeting, co-sponsored by FAO, covered in detail the food products and uses of chickpea, pigeonpea and groundnuts in different regions of the world.

The cover recalls a still-life painting with a photograph of diverse dishes using legumes as the principal ingredient against a black background. Although it appeals as a cookbook, the technical content does not correspond to the cover. It is a clear example of how designers were experimenting with the new possibilities of photography in book cover design.

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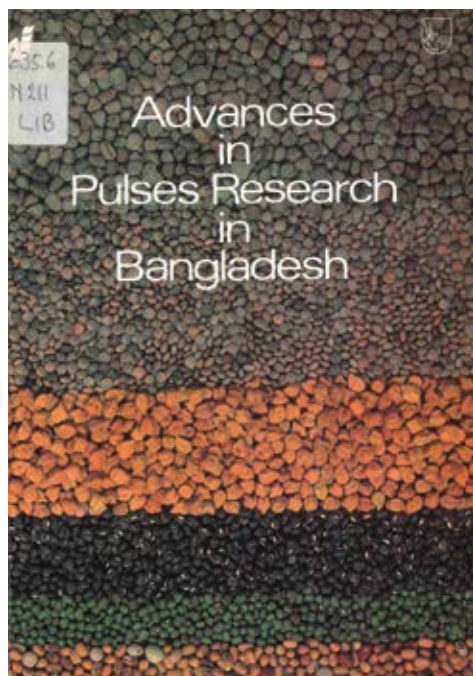


# 1991

## Advances in pulses research in Bangladesh

Author: International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics

Publisher: Patancheru (India), ICRISAT



This proceedings from the Second National Workshop on Pulses held in Bangladesh reviewed the research done on pulses in the 1980s on breeding, crop management and protection, seed production and consumer quality.

The photographic cover using a creative approach to its composition recalls geological strata: it is an image that directly relates to the book's content. In this case, the photograph fully covers the front, back and spine of the book, thereby appearing to wrap the content through the design.

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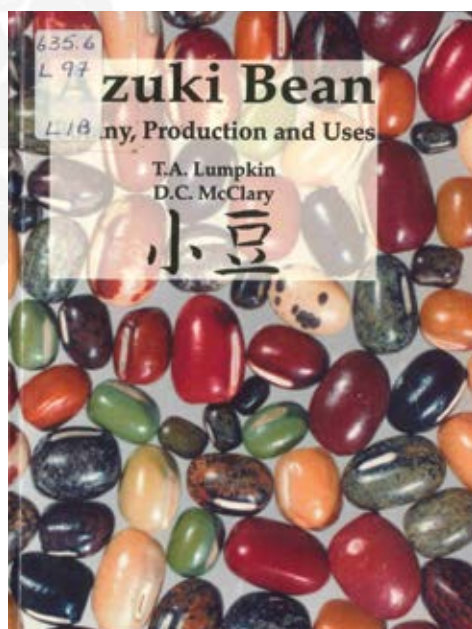


# 1994

## Azuki Bean: botany, production and uses

Author: Lumpkin, T.A., McClary, D.C.

Publisher: Wallingford (United Kingdom),  
CAB International



Being the first monograph on the azuki bean in the world, it contributed greatly to enhancing academic interest in this legume of Asian origin, also referred to as the “red diamond”, because of its color and cultural importance in Asian legume food culture.

The full photographic cover throws a handful of shiny, red diamonds in all its shapes and shades at us – an invitation to start discovering this ignored crop. The original Chinese name of this bean is written in big black Chinese characters under its English translation to remind us of its origin. The design relies entirely on the zoomed photograph and appeals to the use of Photoshop to tell a story.

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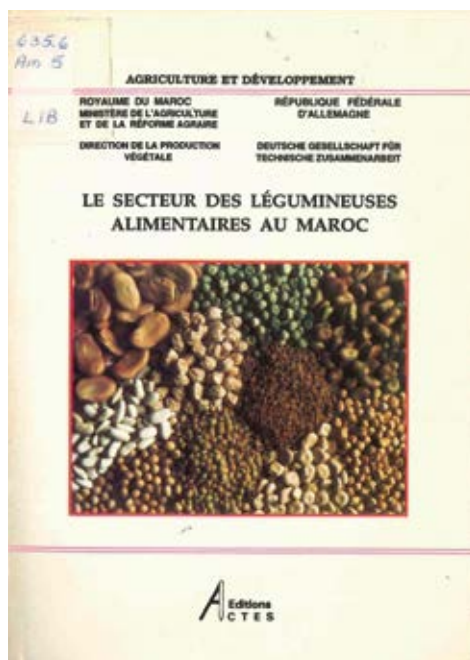


# 1992

## Le secteur des légumineuses alimentaires au Maroc

Author(s): Amine, M. [et al.]

Publisher: Rabat (Morocco), Actes Ed.



This Moroccan-German publication addresses the situation of leguminous plants in Morocco and their important role in crop rotation as well as in the food security of the country.

The cover showcases bilateral cooperation between two countries and their institutions with the use of a photograph from Quadrichromie, a printing house in Rabat. The photograph shows diverse pulses altogether with a mix of textures, colours and sizes. Although not completely covering the front cover, the use of photography is the key element to deliver the content without special attention on typography or colour palette.


.....



# 2000s

## TO THE POINT



A close-up portrait of a woman with dark hair pulled back, wearing a sari with a complex pattern of green, red, and white. The background is a solid, muted green. The lighting is soft, highlighting the texture of the fabric and the woman's features.

The new millennium sees modern and  
minimalist designs, sleek and to the point,  
on the verge of becoming anonymous.

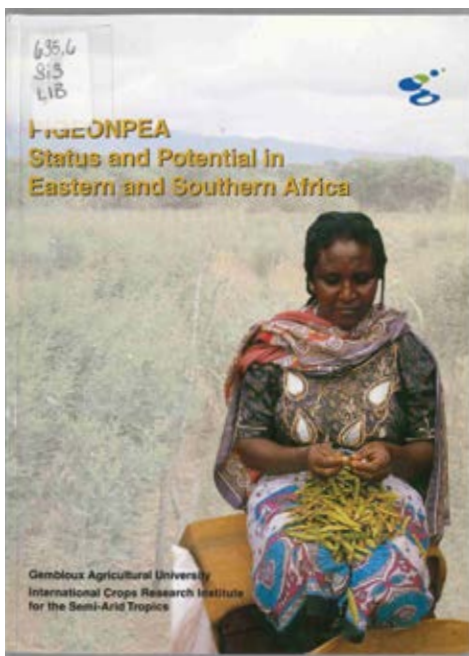
It's all about the message!



# 2001

## Pigeonpea: status and potential in Eastern and Southern Africa

Author: International Crop Research  
Institute for Semi Arid Tropics  
Publisher: Gembloux (Belgium),  
Gembloux Agricultural University;  
Patancheru (India), ICRISAT



The pigeonpea is one of ICRISAT's six mandated crops: crops vital to life for the populations of the semi-arid tropics. This publication contains the proceedings of a regional conference held in Kenya in 2000 with the scope of developing and promoting technology to improve the commercialization of the pigeonpea and provide smallholder farmers with reliable market outlets.

The cover picture has a clear message: gender and production. This is shown using a photoshop design of a woman working against an agricultural crop background. There is no room for typography, colour palettes or composition. Everything emphasizes the anonymous picture of a working woman.

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# 2001

## Legumes in rice-based cropping systems in tropical Asia

Author: International Crop Research

Institute for Semi Arid Tropics

Publisher: Patancheru (India), ICRISAT

Legume cultivation improves and maintains soil fertility in different crop production systems. Despite this knowledge, legume cultivation has declined in rice-based cropping systems in Asia. In this book, an attempt has been made to update the database on area, production and productivity of legumes in tropical rice-growing countries in Asia. Geographical Information System (GIS) technologies have been used to map legume production areas and to indicate production constraints.

The cover shows a Photoshopped picture of a rice field largely covered by legumes displaying the message of the book: to maintain soil health, legume cultivation should be included in rice-based cropping systems. Again, we see that this composition speaks for itself and is aimed at providing a strong message to its readers.

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# 2010

**to the present**  
**TOWARDS THE FUTURE**





This latest FAO publication on pulses breaks with the more anonymous design we see in the first decade of the new millennium, taking inspiration from earlier art styles.



# 2016

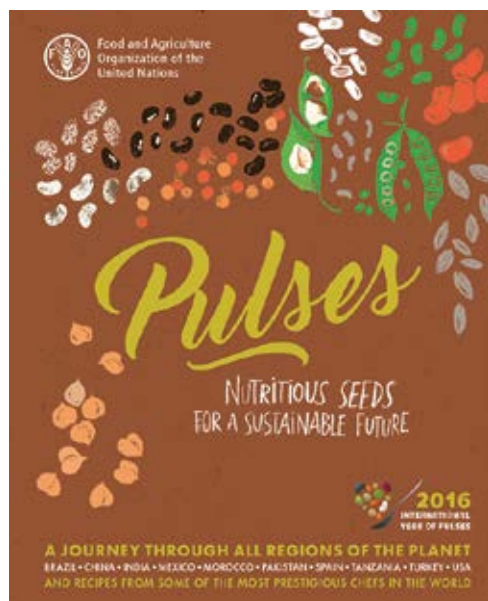
## Pulses: Nutritious seeds for a sustainable future

Author: FAO

Publisher: Rome (Italy): Food and Agriculture  
Organization of the United Nations

This coffee table book, published by FAO to celebrate the International Year of Pulses, is part guide and part cookbook, informative without being technical. The book begins by giving an overview of pulses, and explains why they are an important food for the future. It also includes more than 30 recipes prepared by some of the most best-known chefs in the world and includes a variety of infographics.

The cover shows a lively drawing of different types of legumes encircling the handwritten-like title. The colour palette is based on nature, but the tones are accentuated in their brightness. Overall it has a 1960s feel and a 1970s look to it, but put into perspective to reflect the present.





WOULD YOU  
JUDGE A BOOK  
BY ITS COVER?

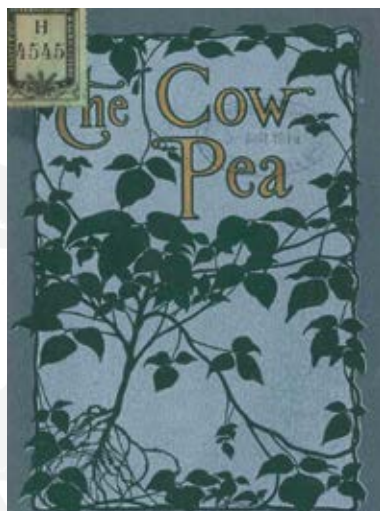
**2010** to the present  
TOWARDS THE FUTURE

# Pulses

NUTRITIOUS SEEDS  
FOR A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE







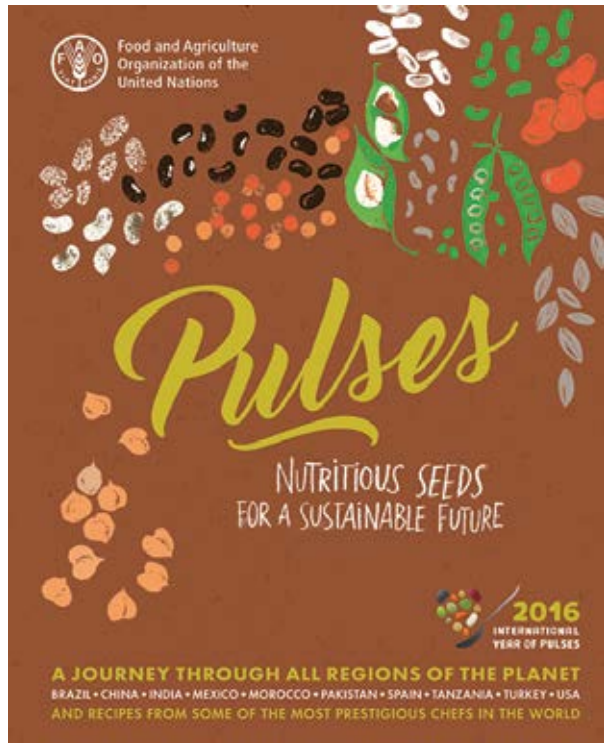
1914



1969

**From 1914 to 2016:  
transforming old into new  
to reflect the present**





2016

This timeline shows how there is an interrelationship between book cover designs, how every period is inspired by earlier art styles and how the meaning of a cover design is shaped by previous designs.

The highly decorative style of the 1910s with its curvilinear plant and floral motives and the ethnic look with nature-based colour palette of the 1960s added layers of depth to the design of the 2010s, transforming the beauty of these early art styles into a timeless modern look. The latest 2016 FAO cover transforms old into new to reflect the present times, as each cover in this exhibition to a greater or lesser extent does, and as all art should.



# Inauguration of the Exhibition November 22<sup>nd</sup> 2016

The exhibition was inaugurated officially on November 22nd, 2016 as part of the International Year of Pulses Global Dialogue meeting.



◀ **22 NOVEMBER 2016, ROME, ITALY** (from left to right): **JOYCE BOYE**, FAO special ambassador for the IYP for North America, **PATRICIA JUÁREZ ARANGO**, FAO special ambassador for the IYP for Latin America and the Caribbean, **MAGY HABIB**, FAO special ambassador for the IYP for the Near East and North Africa, **ELIZABETH MPOFU**, FAO special ambassador for the IYP for Africa.



▲ **22 NOVEMBER 2016, ROME, ITALY** - **SARAH DISTER**, librarian, giving a tour to the participants of the meeting.



▲ **22 NOVEMBER 2016, ROME, ITALY** - (from left to right) **MARCELA VILLAREAL**, Director of the Office for Partnerships, Advocacy and Capacity Development at FAO, and **PEDRO JAVALOYES**, Chief of Publications.



22 NOVEMBER 2016, ROME, ITALY

the library team (from left to right)

SARAH DISTER, LAURA GALEOTTI, VÉRONIQUE MONTES  
BAFFIER, MILENA CAZZATO and STEFANO DEMARCHI.



22 NOVEMBER 2016, ROME, ITALY - participants of the meeting during the inauguration.



## Visit of the President of Fiji with the Director-General

During the **GLOBAL SYMPOSIUM ON SOIL ORGANIC CARBON** organized by FAO in Rome on the 21st of March 2017, the Director-General, **JOSE GRAZIANO DA SILVA**, and the President of the Republic of Fiji, **KONOUSI KONROTE**, visited the library and its exhibition.



▲ **21 MARCH 2017, ROME, ITALY** (from left to right)

**VÉRONIQUE MONTES BAFFIER**, Officer in charge of the FAO Library,

**JOSE GRAZIANO DA SILVA**, Director-General and **KONOUSI KONROTE**, President of Fiji.





◀ 21 MARCH 2017, ROME, ITALY

(from left to right)  
**JOSE GRAZIANO DA SILVA**,  
Director-General  
and **KONOUSI KONROTE**,  
President of Fiji.



◀ 21 MARCH 2017, ROME, ITALY

(from left to right)  
**JOSE GRAZIANO DA SILVA**,  
Director-General,  
**VÉRONIQUE MONTES**  
**BAFFIER**, Oic FAO Library  
and **KONOUSI KONROTE**,  
President of Fiji, in front of  
David Lubin portrait.



FAO marked the International Year of Pulses (IYP) in 2016 by organizing an exhibition at its headquarters and publishing a book offering an overview of publications on these superfood pulses and legumes. The titles featured here were selected from FAO first editions, current publications and the International Institute of Agriculture's collection.

Stretching from the start of the twentieth century to the present day, the compilation provides a visual backdrop alongside detailed descriptions of the various covers of the publications. The evolution of the designs is reflected across the span of decades, telling the story of how this art form has developed in tandem with its content to keep audiences engaged.

The result allows readers to explore for themselves whether they should in fact judge some books by their covers, or at least appreciate them for that most eye-catching of pages.

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